

improper activities affecting the outcome of a United States Senate election held in the State of Louisiana in November 1996.

### GULF WAR ILLNESSES

*Committee on Veterans Affairs:* Committee concluded hearings to examine the United States Government's response with regard to the disclosure of information on the possible exposure of United States and allied troops to chemical and biological weapons during

the Persian Gulf War and the handling of health care concerns of U.S. veterans, after receiving testimony from Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.).

### INTELLIGENCE

*Select Committee on Intelligence:* Committee held closed hearings on intelligence matters, receiving testimony from officials of the intelligence community.

Committee will meet again on Wednesday, April 23.

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## House of Representatives

### Chamber Action

**Bills Introduced:** 47 public bills, H.R. 1358–1404; and 5 resolutions, H. Con. Res. 64 and H. Res. 120–123, were introduced. **Pages H1703–06**

**Reports Filed:** Reports were filed as follows:

H.R. 688, to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to require at least 85 percent of funds appropriated to the Environmental Protection Agency from the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund to be distributed to States for cooperative agreements for undertaking corrective action and for enforcement of subtitle I of such Act (H. Rept. 105–58 Part I).

**Page H1703**

**Speaker Pro Tempore:** Read a letter from the Speaker wherein he designated Representative Kolbe to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. **Page H1621**

**Journal:** By a recorded vote of 317 ayes to 100 noes, Roll No. 84, the House agreed to the Speaker's approval of the Journal of Wednesday, April 16.

**Page H1626**

**Words Stricken From the Record—Proceed in Order:** Objection was heard to the proposal of the Chair that certain words of Representative Lewis of Georgia be stricken from the record by unanimous consent. By a recorded vote of 227 ayes to 190 noes with 3 voting "present", Roll No. 82, the House voted to strike the words from the record. Subsequently, by a recorded vote of 223 ayes to 199 noes, Roll No. 83, the House agreed to table a motion that Representative Lewis of Georgia be allowed to proceed in order.

**Pages H1624–26**

**Member Sworn:** Representative-elect Ciro D. Rodriguez presented himself in the well of the House and was administered the oath of office by the Speaker.

**Pages H1626–27**

**Personal Privilege:** Representative Gingrich rose to a point of personal privilege and was recognized for one hour. **Pages H1627–29**

**21st Century Patent System Improvement Act:** The House completed all general debate and began consideration of amendments to H.R. 400, to amend title 35, United States Code, with respect to patents, and began consideration of amendments. Consideration of amendments will resume on Wednesday, April 23. **Pages H1629–55**

Agreed to the Coble amendment that includes technical changes; delays the publication of patent applications from small business concerns or independent inventors until 3 months after a second notification on the merits is made by the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO); retains the practice of charging small business and independent inventors a reduced application fee; separates operational and policy functions of PTO and creates an Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property Policy to develop patent and trademark policy; establishes an incentive program to train patent and trademark examiners; and strikes authority to accept gifts or donations of services. **Page H1669**

Rejected the Rohrabacher amendment in the nature of a substitute that sought to establish a 17-year patent term from the date the patent is granted or 20 years from the date the patent application is filed; provide that patent applications can be published only if the information is in the public domain in other countries at the time it is filed in the United States, the application has been filed with PTO for five years or longer and PTO determines that the public interest served by publication, or the inventor deliberately withholds publication of the patent; provide for patent examiner training; require that user fees be used only for the Patent and Trademark Office; and specify that contracts between marketing companies and inventors contain standardized

disclosures (rejected by a recorded vote of 178 ayes to 227 noes, Roll No. 85). **Page H1684**

H. Res. 116, the rule providing for the consideration of the bill was agreed to earlier by a voice vote. **Page H1629**

**Committee Resignations:** Read a letter from Representative Holden wherein he resigned from the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight; read a letter from Representative Lampson wherein he resigned from the Committee on Resources; and read a letter from Representative Doggett wherein he resigned from the Committee on Science. **Page H1684**

**Concerning Democracy in Zaire:** The House agreed to H. Res. 115, concerning the promotion of peace, stability, and democracy in Zaire. Agreed to the Royce amendment to the text; and agreed to the Royce amendment to the preamble. **Pages H1684–86**

**Committee Election:** Agreed to H. Res. 120 electing Representatives Holden and Lampson to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; Representative Tauscher to the Committee on Science; Representative Davis of Florida to the Committee on International Relations; Representative Rodriguez to the Committee on National Security; Representative Doggett to the Committee on Resources; and Representative Ford to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. **Page H1687**

**Bipartisan Task Force on Reform of the Ethics Process:** Agreed by unanimous consent that the order of the House of February 12, 1997 be extended through April 23, 1997. On February 12, in furtherance of the understanding concerning the establishment of the ethics task force, it was made in order that during the period beginning immediately and ending on April 11, 1997: (1) the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct may not receive, renew, initiate, or investigate a complaint against the official conduct of a member, officer, or employee of the House; (2) the Committee on Standard of Official Conduct may issue advisory opinions and perform other non-investigative functions; and (3) a resolution addressing the official conduct of a member, officer, or employee of the House that is proposed to be offered from the floor by a member other than the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader as a question of the privileges of the House shall once noticed pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of Rule IX, have precedence of all other questions except motions to adjourn only at a time or place designated by the chair in the legislative schedule within two legislative days after April 11, 1997. **Page H1687**

**Meeting Hour:** Agreed that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 3:00 p.m. on

Monday, April 21; and agreed that when the House adjourns on Monday, it adjourn to meet at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23. **Page H1687**

**Calendar Wednesday:** Agreed that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday, April 23. **Page H1687**

**Senate Messages:** Message received from the Senate today appears on page H1621.

**Quorum Calls—Votes:** Four recorded votes developed during the proceedings of the House today and appear on pages H1624–25, H1625–26, H1626, and H1683–84. There were no quorum calls.

**Adjournment:** Met at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

## *Committee Meetings*

### CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

*Committee on Agriculture:* Ordered reported amended H.R. 1342, to provide for a 1-year enrollment in the conservation reserve of land covered by expiring conservation reserve program contracts.

### NAFTA—REVIEW STATUS

*Committee on Agriculture:* Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities held a hearing on the status of NAFTA with Canada and Mexico. Testimony was heard from August Schumacher, Jr., Administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, USDA; and public witnesses.

### COMMODITY EXCHANGE ACT

*Committee on Agriculture:* Subcommittee on Risk Management and Specialty Crops concluded hearings on reform of the Commodity Exchange Act and provisions of H.R. 467, Commodity Exchange Act Amendments of 1997. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### COMMERCE, JUSTICE, STATE, AND JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS

*Committee on Appropriations:* Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary continued appropriation hearings. Testimony was heard from public witnesses.

### FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS

*Committee on Appropriations:* Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs held a hearing on Export Finance Agencies. Testimony was heard from Rita M. Rodriguez, Acting